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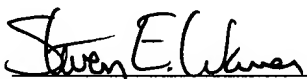
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☒ Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:)	
	:	Examiner: E. L. Frank
Gen NAKAMURA)	
	:	Group Art Unit: 2125
Application No.: 10/044,937)	
	:	Confirmation No.: 1497
Filed: January 15, 2002)	
	:	
For: SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING)	October 6, 2003
APPARATUS	:	(Monday)

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION REQUIREMENT

Sir:

Applicant respectfully traverses the restriction requirement set forth in the Office
Action dated September 4, 2003.

In the Office Action, the Examiner sets forth a restriction requirement among four
groups of claims. Group I, claims 1-20, is drawn to a semiconductor manufacturing
apparatus, and is classified in class 700, subclass 300; Group II, claims 21-23, is drawn to a
semiconductor manufacturing method, and is classified in class 700, subclass 121; Group
III, claim 24, is drawn to a network for communicating machine status, and is classified in
class 702, subclass 188; and Group IV, claim 25, is drawn to a semiconductor
manufacturing machine maintenance method, and is classified in class 702, subclass 183.

The Examiner contends that the inventions of Groups I, III and IV are related as product and process of use, and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification. These contentions are respectfully traversed. In short, Applicant submits that these inventions are not related as “product and process of use.”

Applicant further notes that the inventions of Groups I, II, III and IV are closely related in the field of semiconductor manufacture, and that a proper search of any of the claims would, of necessity, require a search of the others. Thus, it is submitted that all of the claims can be searched simultaneously, and that a duplicative search, with possibly inconsistent results, may occur if the restriction requirement is maintained.

Applicant further submits that any nominal burden placed upon the Examiner to search an additional subclass or two, necessary to determine the art relevant to Applicant’s overall invention, is significantly outweighed by the public interest in not having to obtain and study several separate patents in order to have available all of the issued patent claims covering Applicant’s invention. The alternative is to proceed with the filing of multiple applications, each consisting of generally the same disclosure, and each being subjected to substantially the same search, perhaps by different Examiners on different occasions. This places an unnecessary burden on both the Patent and Trademark Office and on Applicant.

In the interest of economy, for the Office, for the public-at-large and for Applicant, reconsideration and withdrawal of the restriction requirement are respectfully requested.

Nevertheless, in order to comply with the requirements of 37 CFR 1.143, Applicants provisionally elect, with traverse, to prosecute the invention of Group I, namely claims 1-20.

Favorable consideration and an early passage to issue are also requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven E. Warner", is written over a horizontal line.

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